A

SERMON

Preached at the

Cathedral Church of St. *Paul*,

Before the Right Honourable the

LORD MAYOR,

THE

ALDERMEN, and CITIZENS of *London*,

On *Thurſday*, *April* 25, 1723.

Being the Day appointed by His Majeſty for a Publick Thankſgiving, &c.

Conyers Mayor.

Martis 30° *die Aprilis* 1723, *annoq; Regni Regis Georgii Magnæ Britanniæ*, &c. *nono.*

IT is Ordered, That the Thanks of this Court be given to Mr. *Pearce* for his Sermon preached before this Court, and the Liveries of the ſeveral Companies of this City, at the Cathedral Church of St. *Paul* on *Thurſday* laſt, being the Day appointed by his Majeſty's Royal Proclamation, to be obſerved as a Day of Thankſgiving for the ceaſing of the Plague in *France*; And that he be deſir'd to Print the ſame.

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LORD MAYOR,

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On *Thurſday*, *April* 25, 1723.

Being the Day appointed by His Majeſty for a Publick Thankſgiving to Almighty God, for Preſerving his Majeſty and his Subjects from that dreadful Plague, with which the Kingdom of *France* was lately viſited; and for putting an End to the ſame.

By *Z. PEARCE*, A. M.
Rector of St. *Bartholomew*'s near the *Exchange*, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majeſty.

LONDON:
Printed for J. TONSON, in the *Strand*. M DCC XXIII.

A

SERMON

Preached at the

Cathedral Church of St. Paul,

Before the Right Honourable the

LORD MAYOR,

THE

ALDERMEN, and CITIZENS of London,

On Thursday, April 25, 1723.

Being the Day appointed by His Majesty for a Public Thanksgiving to Almighty God, for Preserving his Majesty and his Subjects from that dreadful Plague, with which the Kingdom of France was lately visited; and for putting an End to the same.

By Z. PEARCE, A. M.

Rector of St. Bartholomew's near the Exchange, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

LONDON:

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PSALM CXXX. 4.

There is forgiveneſs with Thee, that thou may'ſt be feared.

IN this ſolemn and wiſhed-for Occaſion, when in Obedience to the Royal Commands, and (I truſt) under a deep Senſe of our Obligations to Heaven, we are met together in this ſacred Place, with the Hearts of Grateful Men, and with the Lips of Thankſgiving, a more proper Reflection cannot, I think, be made, than upon what the Text offers you, the *Forgiveneſs* that there is with God, and the *Fear*, which we owe him upon that Account.

And in order to ſhew you both the ſenſe of the Text, and its fitneſs to our preſent Circumſtances, I ſhould begin with conſidering the Meaning of ſome Expreſſions in it, but I muſt ſuſpend this Enquiry a while —— for Joy, like that of this Day, knows no Rules, and the Tongue will pronounce what the over-flowing Heart dictates —— Bleſſed then, for ever bleſſed be God, who has kept this bitter Evil, which we feared, at a Diſtance from Us, and has taught us a Leſſon of his Power at the eaſy Price of the Experience of our Neighbours: We are here in the Preſence of God, not as thoſe who are now healed, but as thoſe who have been hitherto protected; not as thoſe who are come ſafe out of the fiery Furnace of a Peſtilence, but as thoſe who have ſuffer'd nothing, except what their Fears and Apprehenſions laid upon them: there is no bitter Remembrance in the midſt of our Joy; no unwelcome Reflection upon what is paſt

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taints our preſent Delight of Thankſgiving: in full Crowds, in a Multitude not thin'd by any late raging Deſtruction, nor having either the Habits or Countenances of former Sorrows, we appear in the Houſe of God with the Tokens of a moſt ſincere and unmixed Joy.

And now the Method, into which I propoſe to caſt your Thoughts in diſcourſing upon the Words of this Text, will be this.

(1.) I will enquire into what is meant there by *Forgiveneſs*, and what by *Fearing*.

(2.) I will conſider the Doctrine which the Words, as I ſhall explain them, convey to us, and upon what good Reaſons it is founded: and

(3.) I ſhall endeavour to apply what the Text teaches us, to our preſent Circumſtances, and to this joyful Occaſion of aſſembling our ſelves together. And

[I.] As to the meaning of the Words,

(1.) *Forgiveneſs* comes firſt to be conſider'd, which is an Attribute of wide extent in God; for in general its Matter is either Temporal or Spiritual Puniſhment; its Object is either ſome private Perſon, or a publick Society; its Means are either the ſole Good-will and Kindneſs of God waiting ſtill with Patience for the Repentance of a Sinner, or ſomething done to win the Favour of Heaven, ſomething deſerving perform'd on the part of thoſe, to whom Forgiveneſs is vouchſafed. But I conceive that it is here us'd by the Pſalmiſt in a Senſe more particularly ſuited to the Purpoſe of this ſolemn Aſſembly; for

1. There are good Reaſons to think, that this *Forgiveneſs* means only or chiefly a National one; both becauſe the Author of this Pſalm is ſaid to have been *Nehemiah*, one of the Reſtorers of the Jewiſh Government; and becauſe in v. 7. the Nation of the *Jews* is called upon in theſe comforting Words, *Let Iſrael hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous Redemption.*

2. It ſeems, that in the Text ſuch a *Forgiveneſs* is meant, as is granted by God upon the account of ſome Means publickly taken by a Nation in order to appeaſe his Wrath. For the

LXX

LXX have translated the *Hebrew* Word by one that signifies *Propitiation*, which, * tho' not the exact Sense of it, yet gives us a sufficient Hint, that this *forgiveness* is a pacify'd Disposition of Mind in God, caused by some Methods of Humiliation and Intercession in those, who are forgiven: and many such Methods the Nations of old had among them: In the Epistle of this Day's Service, you heard of one, I mean Incense, which *Moses* directed *Aaron* to burn, *when wrath was gone out from the Lord, and the Plague was begun* among the People of *Israel*; and by this burning of Incense, it said, that *Aaron stood between the Dead and the Living, and the Plague was stayed.* And the Heathen Nations had some Inventions of their own upon the Occasion of such Calamities; which, tho' Ridiculous ones, yet shew'd that it was a received Notion among them, that Publick Evils were only to be remov'd by Publick Endeavours: and none of them may be more excusably mention'd at this time, than what † some Authors have related concerning the ancient Inhabitants of *Marseilles*, a City as unhappily Eminent of old, as late, for its dreadful Sufferings under Pestilential Distempers. It was their Custom, when any Plague rag'd among them formerly, to take some poor Man, who offer'd himself for this fatal Experiment, and to maintain him a whole Year with the best Provisions at the City's Expence: after this he was led forth, as the publick Sacrifice, adorn'd with such Herbs and Garments as were accounted Sacred: and was cast from the Top of a Rock into

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* The Word, by which the LXX render the Original Word, is ἱλασμὸς; which properly signifies the Action of him who appeases, nor the Disposition of Mind in him who is appeased: so in 1 *John* iv. 10. *He sent his Son to be* ἱλασμὸν *the Propitiation for our Sins:* and so in *Plutarch*'s Life of *Fabius Maximus* ἱλασμοὶ θεῶν are made equivalent to τερατῶν ἀπολύσεις: and therefore the *Hebrew* Word כִּפֻּר apply'd to God in *Ps.* lxxxvi. 5. which the LXX have translated ἐπιεικὴς, and others ἱλεως *propitius*, is much better render'd by St. *Jerom propitiabilis.*

† This Custom is mention'd, as prevailing among the Inhabitants of *Marseilles*, by *Petronius* in the End of his *Satyricon*, from whom it is quoted by *Servius* in his Comment upon *Virgil*'s Æneid, B. 3. v. 57. It is mention'd also as a Custom among the *Gauls*, by *Cæsar* in the 6th Book of his Commentaries, and by *Placidus Lactantius* in his *Scholia* upon *Statius*'s *Thebaid*, Book 10. v. 793. the Scholiast likewise upon the *Plut.* and *Equit.* of *Aristophanes* speaks in general of its being the usual Practice among the *Athenians* to offer up Men in Sacrifice to the Gods for averting Plagues or other publick Calamities; and so does *Suidas in voce* περίψημα & καθάρμα.

into the Sea, while the People were praying, that all the Calamities of the City might fall on his Head only, and saying † *Be thou the Atonement* (or *Purgation*) *for us.*

(2.) The other Part of the Text to be explain'd is, *That thou mayst be feared*: for, what? Is *Fearfulness* in God the proper Foundation of *Fear* in his Creatures? Are we to be Tormented (for as St. *John* says, 1 Ep. iv. 8. all *Fear has torment*) because he is Good and Gracious unto us? He is rather to be Loved on this Account, than *feared*: rather should we Rejoice at this, than be cast down by any oppressing Awe: but all this difficulty will soon vanish, and all these Questions be easily answer'd to your Satisfaction; when you are informed that the *Hebrew* Word in this Place *, which the *Greek* Translators have quite mistaken, should (with all due Submission I speak it) be rather thus understood, *that thou mayst be regarded*, or *respected*, or *reverenced*: that this is what is meant by *Fear* ‡ appears from many Passages of

† *Suidas* tells us that the Words, which they pronounced, when they cast a Human Sacrifice into the Sea, upon such Occasions as this, were περικαθαρμα ημων γενου: from whence we may, I think, see that the Words of St. *Paul* in 1 *Cor.* iv. 13. περικαθαρμα should be rendered *the off-scouring* (or Purgation) *of all Men*, not *of all things*.

* The LXX according to the *Alex.* MS. render it ἵνα σε φοβηθῶσι: which appears from the Old *Latin* Version, to be the true reading: and not ὑποτάξωσι, which stands in the common Editions of the *Greek* Bible: it seems as if the LXX read תורא instead of יראה and from thence probably their Mistake arose.

‡ So in *Job* i. 1. where it is said that he was *one who feared God*, the LXX have θεοσεβης ην; and in *Jonah* i. 9. where it is said *I fear the Lord God of Heaven*, the LXX have σεβομαι Κυριον &c. In both which Places, as well as the Text, יראה is the Original Word for *fearing*; and according to this Sense of the Word, we are, I think, to understand what is said in *Ps.* xlix. 16. *Be not thou afraid* (or rather *Care not, do not regard, or do not respect him*) *when one is made rich*; for the Reason of this Advice, given in the following Verse, arises not from his Power of hurting, but from the shortness and nuance of himself and his Riches: And in the same manner as יראה is used in the *Old Testament*, the *Greek* Word φοβουμαι is used in the *New Testament*; for when it is said in *Heb.* xi. 23. that *they were not afraid of* τὸ διάταγμα *the King's Commandment*, the Scope of it is rightly expressed by *Philo Judæus*, who, speaking of *Moses*'s Parents, says, ὑπερηφρονησαν τῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ Τυραννου κηρυχθεντων ἀλογησαντες; i. e. they paid no Regard to the King's Commandment: so in *Mark* vi. 20. when it is said *Herod fear'd John*, the following Words, *knowing that he was a just Man and an Holy*, do, I think, intimate that the Fear of *Herod* was only Reverence and Respect arising from his good Opinion of that Prophet: may the Word φοβέομαι is actually render'd thus, as it is plain it ought to be, in *Eph.* v. 33. where we read, *Let the Wife see, that she* φοβηται *reverence her Husband*: Almost every Man's reading will furnish him with Observations of this nature, and many Passages of Holy Scripture will, I believe, from this Hint appear much more intelligible and rational.

of the *Old* and *New Teſtament*, but chiefly from *Exod.* ix. 20, 21. where it is ſaid: *He, that feared the word of the Lord among the Servants of Pharaoh, made his Servants and his Cattle to flee into the Houſes; But he that regarded not the word of the Lord, left them in the Field.* Where you may plainly ſee what is the Senſe of the Word *fearing*, by the reverſe of it *not regarding*. Fear is a reſtleſs and tormenting Paſſion; Reverence or a reſpectful Regard is conſiſtent with an eaſy and chearful Diſpoſition of the Mind; Fear ariſes from a Reflection on the Power, Reverence from a Conſideration of the Goodneſs of ſome Superiour; in a Word, *he that feareth*, (as St. *John* ſays, 1 Ep. iv. 18.) *is not made perfect in Love*; but Reverence does always teſtify a high Eſteem of, and good Affection toward the Perſon, who is the Object of it.

These Explanations therefore of the Text being admitted, I proceed

[2.] To conſider the Doctrine which is taught here, and upon what good Reaſons it is founded; and the Amount of what the *Pſalmiſt* ſays in the Text, as I have expounded it, is that one End of God's forgiving a Nation upon its publick Repentance and Interceſſion for Pardon, is that it may learn to reverence and reſpect him.

And this Effect, intended by God, will appear a very natural one, when we conſider two Things neceſſarily included in the Notion of *Forgiveneſs*: For

(1.) He who is ſaid to *forgive*, is at the ſame time acknowledg'd to have a Power to puniſh, and a Will not to exerciſe that Power: he is ſuppos'd to have his Sword ready drawn and whetted for Vengeance; but to throw it aſide, and to let ſevere Juſtice be melted down into Mercy and Compaſſion. And is not this an engaging, an endearing Circumſtance? Does it not call for every Degree of our Love and Veneration, to reflect, that the Supreme and moſt Mighty of all Beings is thus won over, and (as it were) conquer'd by the unarm'd Reſiſtance of his Creatures, by no other Force than that of Publick Repentance, Prayers and Interceſſions? That, as the Greatneſs of his Power is ſhewn in that he is Able, ſo the Excellency of his Nature is manifeſted in that he is Unwilling to puniſh Tranſgreſſors?

(2.) He who is ſaid to *forgive*, is ſaid likewiſe at the ſame time from an Enemy to become a Friend, and to begin the Friendſhip with a real Act of Favour on his Side; he is ſuppos'd (tho' a

Superior) not only to shew a Disposition towards a Reconciliation, not only to make some condescending Advances towards it; but to open the Scene in his own Person, and act the first Part himself in this generous Friendship. And who that is worthy of being respected and reverenced, if such a Being is not? Is this the *Forgiveness* that *is with God?* then surely the most natural Effect, which it can have upon us, is, that we hold him in high Esteem, that we love and adore him in his transcendent Goodness.

These two Reflections therefore may help us in some measure to judge of the Propriety of the *Psalmist*'s Assertion, when he says *There is Forgiveness with thee, that thou mayst be feared.*

Give me Leave then to come home to our selves, and

[3.] Apply the foregoing Doctrine to our own Circumstances and to the joyful Occasion of this assembling our selves together.

It is now above three Years, since it pleased God to send into one Part of a Kingdom, not very remote from us, a Pestilence so violent, so fatal, so lasting, and so universal where it raged, that neither the Memory of the Present, nor the Records of past Ages can, I think, furnish us with any that ever exceeded it. All the Nations round about did very justly take the Alarm; and we more especially, from the Extensiveness of our foreign Commerces, and from the clandestine Methods practis'd in some Branches of it, had great Reason to fear, left this sweeping Destruction should reach us, left we too should be involv'd in this contagious Calamity.

For when such a Plague as this has gone forth upon the Earth, it has generally carry'd with it a wide and extensive Commission, to possess the whole Country where it first enter'd; as if it had receiv'd such another Command, as that which God gave to *Abraham*, when he said, Gen. xiii. 17. *Arise, walk through the Land in the length of it, and in the breadth of it, for I will give it unto thee*: Nay it takes for the most part a much larger March, and travels with its Train of Woes from one Country to another, every where triumphing like some universal Conqueror, overcoming all the Opposition of Lines and Guards, of Mountains and even Seas; making its fatal Course as compleat as that of the Sun, and therefore entitling its pestilential Progress to those Expressions, which *David* has in *Psal.* xix. 6. us'd concerning the Sun's daily Courts. *His going forth is from the End of the Heaven, and his Circuit unto the Ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the Heat,*

Heat, (not from the comforting Heat, such as that of the Sun is, but from the devouring Heat) *thereof*.

But the divine Providence has now set Bounds to that infectious Distemper, which of its self knows none: Almost, where it first began, there it spent all its Rage; and that City, into which it was first imported, saw all the Effects of it within its self and the neighbouring Cities and Villages. It seems (for we may humbly guess at the Designs of Providence in the Events of things) it seems, I say, as if Heaven had set up its Standard of Vengeance in that Country, or had held up its flaming Sword of Wrath steady and fix'd there, commanding all Nations round about, all who saw or heard of it at a Distance, to prevent its Approach by a timely Repentance; that so the Miseries of one Country might be a Lesson to all; and that we might know, that God *does not willingly afflict the Children of Men*.

In order to appease the Anger of Heaven, a Fast was long since proclaim'd and observ'd among us, as it was among the *Ninevites*, recorded in one of the Lessons of this Day: we fasted, and pray'd, and humbled our selves before God, with an universal Consent; and, I trust, with an unfeigned Devotion of all Sects in Religion among us.

To the prudent Directions therefore of our Soveraign, to the wholesome Advice of his Council, to the great Vigilance of those who guarded our Coasts, but more to the solemn Humiliation and continued Prayers of the People of this Land offer'd up reverently and devoutly to the Throne of Grace, most of all to the undeserv'd Goodness of Providence, which has in many, in numberless Instances protected us from Dangers great and various, it is (we may presume to say, it is) owing, that this Nation has been forgiven, and that God has suffer'd nothing, but the Fears of and Compassion for the Calamities of our Neighbours, to approach us.

Methinks I should neither misuse My Time nor Your Patience, if I endeavour'd to make you sensible of the Greatness of this Deliverance, by giving you some general (tho' imperfect) Description of what you would have experienc'd, had this Scourge of Heaven ever infested these our Dwellings with the same Violence, with which our Neighbours felt it.

From small Beginnings and private Losses it soon increases and becomes a publick Calamity: the Art and Industry of Physicians

is at first oppos'd to it, but it immediately almost becomes too hard for their very best Skill, and triumphs over not only the Medicine, but the Physician himself. Then the Apprehensions and Fears of Men are awaken'd and rouse themselves--but useless are their Apprehensions, pernicious their Fears——Then all the Labour of the Industrious Poor is discourag'd, all Commerce of the Merchant is stop'd, and all Administration of Justice suspended: one general Interruption of Business seizes the Court, the Camp and the City: Pain and Death, excessive Pain and almost unavoidable Death follow at the Heels of such an invisible Destroyer; while Despair marches before it, preparing the way in the breasts of all Men for its sure and easy Reception.

To have our nearest and best beloved Friends or Relations expiring, without Help, without the last Offices of Affection paid to them: or, if we have Firmness enough of Mind to draw near them in their last violent Hour, to be so ill repay'd for our kind Attendance, as to run all the Hazard of their Calamitous Fate: not to be able to give a farewell Kiss to the Dying, without the Danger of receiving from their Lips the earnest of our own Death; not to be able to hear their last Words and Advices, without admitting the most poysonous Infection amidst their wholesome Instructions; in a word, not to be able to forsake them without a breach of our Duty, nor to visit them without the hazard of our Lives; These are a part (and but a small part) of those Circumstances, which are always found in the Retinue of such a spreading Destruction.

What is more necessary to Life, than the Air which we breathe in? but then Men justly fear least every Draught of it should be fatal, lest (as the Prophet expresses it, *Isai.* xxxiii. 11.) *their Breath, as Fire, should devour them.* What is more comfortable to Life than Society and Conversation? but then not only the Company, but the accidental Meeting of our Fellow Creatures is dangerous, and all Men, like *Cain*, have a constant Dread hanging upon them, least *every one that findeth them* in the Streets *should slay them* with the Infection which he carries about him. Sorrowful Looks, mournful Habits and earnest Cries to Heaven are the least melting part of so sad a Scene; Thousands in our Streets and ten thousands in our Houses, either expiring or breathless, either cast negligently into the publick Ways, or led along to the Grave without Pomp, without Shew, and almost without Decency, are the large

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Sacrifice, which is continually offer'd up to this cruel Invader.—None to be met with, but the Mourner, or the Sick, or the Deceased.—O where is Safety to be found at such a time? Art and Caution do not promise it; Privacy and Retirement cannot effect it; Company and Conversation are the most probable means of destroying it.—

But I will pursue this unskilful Representation no farther: *Unskilful* I acknowledge it to be, and for ever praised be the Divine Goodness, that neither I am able to make, nor You to judge, what is an exact Description of such a Pestilence. History and the sad Experience of our Neighbours do thus far instruct us in what was the Fate of those, who have suffer'd by it; but our own Reason and Gratitude must teach us what is the Duty of those, who have been preserv'd from it: for, if so Great be the Deliverance, which we are now met together to commemorate; if the Expression of the Psalmist, that *there is forgiveness with God*, comes so Home to our present Circumstances, how is it, that we are to *fear*, i. e. reverence and respect him?

(1.) In the first place let us be careful to practise all those publick Virtues, which God requires at the Hands of every Nation: Such as Obedience and Loyalty to that Soveraign, whom God has placed over us; such as a Regard to our most solemn Oaths of Allegiance, and an Abhorrence of the Breach of them in all those, whatsoever their Character and Station is, with whom it is plainly found: Such as a due Observance of our Country's Laws in all private Subjects, and a steady, impartial, and uncorrupt Execution of them in those, who are invested with any Branch of the Magistracy. Such as (for I must mention some others, tho' we are rather to be encourag'd to continue in, than to be exhorted to enter into the Practice of them) I say, such as Charity and Tenderness, so much Charity and Tenderness towards all who differ from us in Religious Worship, as is consistent with the preserving and securing not only the Welfare, but the Honour of our Church and State: and such as our peaceable Disposition towards the Kingdoms round about us, our having no thirst after Martial Glory, or universal Empire to the Disturbance of our Neighbours; our long, uninterrupted, and as it were Hereditary Contentment with our own Dominions, without seizing upon, or aiming at, or desiring to gain any thing from others by Violence, whenever their Weakness or our own Strength reaches out to us a favourable Opportunity.

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(2.) In the second Place let us so reverence God, who hath thus *forgiven* us, as to shew both in our Words and Actions, all imaginable Proofs of a joyful Thankfulness. *Rejoice unto him with reverence*, is what *David*, *Psal.* ii. 11. invites us to do; and to discharge this aright, it is not sufficient, that you are delighted to hear the solemn Notes of some Thanksgiving Anthem sung on this Occasion; it is not sufficient, that your Hearts are lifted up with a Sense of this Blessing, while the Excellent Service of this Day is devoutly reading; it is not sufficient, that you are chear'd by being perhaps made to look a little farther into the Greatness of this Deliverance thro' the well-meant, tho' Imperfect, Endeavours of your Preacher: Your Gratitude must remain with you, when this large Assembly shall return every one to his own Dwelling: Let this Day be distinguished for the Solemnity of a publick Thanksgiving, but let every other Day have its proper (and that no small) share of Gratitude and Joy in private: Nor let your Thankfulness be Lasting only, but let it be Universal. Call to mind all the other Blessings, with which God has crown'd this Nation: take in the whole Circle of your Deliverances, and forget not, I intreat you, forget not to be thankful for the last, and signal Instance of the Kindness of Providence, which You especially of this City have received. It was over your Dwellings that the first Rage of the lately-discover'd Conspiracy hung; you were the great and rich Sacrifice with which the Enemies of our national Happiness and our Soveraign's Title design'd to open their Infernal Scheme: Had it succeeded to their wicked Hearts Desire, alas! how had this Imperial City fallen! Midnight Tumults and Outcries had broke your Rest, and awaken'd you into a Sense of the greatest Danger, while some of you, as Wealthy Men, were mark'd out for Plunder, and almost all of you, as Loyal Men, were assign'd over to Slaughter, if you had (as your Duty bound you, as I believe your Inclination mov'd you) offer'd any Resistance against the Fury of that Midnight Insurrection. Within the Walls of this Flourishing City, where gentle Peace has long reign'd, War, Civil War, that most licentious of all Wars, had raged. That Place, which is now the Centre of your Concourse for carrying on Trade, was allotted for the Head-quarters of some Arch-rebel, under the *Title* of a *General*: From your Exchange, instead of Orders for Goods, Military Orders had been issued,

instead

inſtead of peaceable Merchants, lawleſs Soldiers had poſſeſs'd your Walks; inſtead of free Commerce, the Violence of War had there taken its Station:

Who the Agents were in this black Deſign, by what Motives they were influenc'd, and what Means they employ'd, muſt be left untouch'd, as being under the Enquiry of that Parliament, which is both willing and able to do Right to an injur'd Nation, and to this City in particular: but I cannot forbear to obſerve ſome of the moſt aggravating Circumſtances of this Deſtructive Attempt; When I conſider that Men of our own Nation, and Religion, Men uninjur'd and unprovoked, Men who have the Obligation of the ſtrongeſt and moſt ſolemn Oaths lying upon them, thought, with'd, and even attempted, not meerly to diſturb our Happineſs, and make our Sovereign's Reign uneaſy; not meerly to promote their own Party, even with the Hazard of a violent Shock to the State; but to overthrow the whole Eſtabliſhment, diſpoſſeſs the Royal Family, and even lay violent Hands upon the *Anointed of the Lord*; and this not in the Face of Day, not by Force of open War, but by a Midnight Inſurrection, by the unfair Arts of Surprize and ſudden Commotion; and all this in Favour of one whom they had publickly abjur'd, and of one differing in Religion from Them and Us; and therefore of one, whoſe arrival would be attended perhaps with the Ruin of our Liberties, very probably with the Loſs of the greateſt part of our Properties, moſt certainly with the exchange of our ſound Religion, for one imperious and perſecuting, erroneous and idolatrous, and therefore fitted to make Men neither happy in this World, nor the Next: I ſay, when I conſider all theſe Circumſtances accompanying the Attempt, it appears to me in the moſt conſpicuous manner an Unwiſe as well as an Unrighteous one; and tho' the Text inſtructs me that there may be a Pardon and Atonement for the Wickedneſs of it, yet I know of no Defence or Excuſe that can be made for the Folly of it——

But it is time to call home our Thoughts to the more welcome Reflection upon God's Mercy to this Nation; *with him there is forgiveneſs*, nay *with him there is plenteous redemption*; Like an indulgent Father watching over his beloved Child, he has given us almoſt daily Inſtances of his Kindneſs in ſcattering every Cloud of Calamity, which was gather'd over our Heads, and

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in bringing to light the worst Deeds of Darkness, which were contriv'd against us: he has rescued us not only *from the* Pestilential *Arrow that flieth by Day*, but from the murdering Sword, which was design'd for the Night's Execution. *Rejoyce therefore in the Lord*, all you who have seen how Good and Gracious he is: and let your Joy be that of the Thankful, not of the Riotous, let it be Chearfulness, rather than Mirth; let it look forward and regard what your Duty is to be, as well as look back and reflect upon what your Deliverance has been: And if ye thus *fear* God, by practising all the National Virtues, by rejoycing in Publick and Private with a religious and a lasting and an active Gratitude, then I will venture to apply to you the comforting Promise of Holy *David*, *Psal.* xci. 10. *There shall no Evil befal you, neither shall any Plague come nigh your Dwellings.*

Which may God of his Infinite Mercy grant, &c.

FINIS.